

March 11, 2009

**FEDERAL BUDGET CONTAINS OVER \$18 MILLION TO IMPROVE
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY IN NORTHERN WISCONSIN, OBEY SAYS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Seventh District Congressman Dave Obey (D-WI), who as Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee was the lead architect of the Obama economic recovery package, announced today that the budget signed by the President today includes numerous items to help improve economic opportunity in northern Wisconsin.

"In tough economic times these provisions will be important to local communities all over Northern Wisconsin," Obey said, noting that the initiatives that will benefit Northern Wisconsin in the budget include:

- \$5,556,000 for the Northern Wisconsin Environmental Assistance Program: This program helps small communities in the four counties that border Lake Superior complete water infrastructure projects that they might otherwise not be able to afford. The projects are chosen by community leaders in those four counties, and ensure the health of Lake Superior while providing clean and safe water, as well as economic opportunity. The program is authorized - this funding takes the program to its full authorization.

- \$5,000,000 for Apostle Islands Lighthouse Restoration: The funds are intended to allow the U.S. Parks Service to conduct necessary reconstruction and preservation of historic lighthouses in the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. The Park Service has identified over \$12 million in needed repair and restoration projects at six historic lighthouses.

- \$2,000,000 for Wisconsin's Wild Waterways: The funds are intended to help protect sensitive lands and acquire new land to improve forest management on the Chequamegon Nicolet National Forest.

- \$1,900,000 for Highway 53 Intersections: The funding will assist the Wisconsin Dept. Of Transportation in ongoing work studying, designing and constructing safe intersections along State Highway 53 between Superior and Rice Lake. The lack of controlled freeway style merge lanes for access and exit to and from Highway 53 has created a number of dangerous situations along the road.

- \$950,000 for the Great Ships Initiative - Ballast Water Research: the funding will be used to continue research to test and develop ballast water treatment technology to resolve the problem of ship-mediated invasive species in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway System

- \$950,000 for the Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute: The funds are intended to continue an authorized project to develop and improve economically and environmentally sustainable maritime commerce on the Great Lakes through applied research at institutions throughout the region, including Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, New York, Minnesota and Wisconsin. GLMRI was designated by George Bush's Maritime Administration (MARAD) as one of 8 National Maritime Enhancement Institutes in June 2005. Its work is overseen by an advisory board that includes MARAD, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Coast Guard and the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, Great Lakes ports and shippers.

- \$750,000 to upgrade the Douglas County Sheriff's Department Communications Center: The funds are intended to help the County purchase and install digital, interoperable communications equipment to replace a communications system that is more than twenty-five years old, needs constant repairs, and cannot provide full radio coverage throughout the county. The new system includes a digital communications "backbone" and new mobile radios for squad cars and individual officers.

- \$476,000 for After School Programs by Cooperative Educational Service Agency #12: These funds are intended to help CESA 12 continue to provide a safe, healthy, enriching, supervised after-school environment for children in Ashland, Bayfield, Butternut, Glidden, Hurley, and Mellen Wisconsin. Research shows that when students have an alternative place to go after school where they can study and be supervised by an adult, not only are they less likely to get into trouble, but they also have a better education experience.

- \$346,000 for the UW-Extension Aquaculture Demonstration Facility: Requested by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture and the UW-Extension Service, these funds support an extension and outreach program located on the Red Cliff Chippewa Indian Reservation to address the needs of fish farms and hatcheries in Wisconsin and other states where cold climates create unique challenges and opportunities.

- \$95,000 for a study of silting issues in Cornucopia Harbor: The funds will enable the Army Corps of Engineers to determine what steps can be taken to reduce the sediment loading on Lake Superior and reduce the need for dredging in the harbor. Small harbors are essential for safety and economic activity on the Great Lakes, and the Army Corps of Engineers has a responsibility to support them.

- \$60,000 for mapping wetland and land cover for the Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Chippewa: This funding is intended to help the Bad River Band better manage their land resources for agricultural use while protecting Lake Superior.

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